

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 729

By Weaver

A RESOLUTION relative to the Erwin and Dale Hollow National Fish Hatcheries.

WHEREAS, the federal government may cease funding for the Erwin and Dale Hollow National Fish Hatcheries; and

WHEREAS, these fish hatcheries provide the foundation for Tennessee's world-renowned trout fishery waters, which produce a total economic impact of well over seventy-six million dollars (\$76,000,000) annually while only costing taxpayers approximately one million four hundred-thousand dollars (\$1,400,000) annually to operate. The hatcheries at Erwin and Dale Hollow alone generate two-million-seven-hundred-thousand dollars (\$2,700,000) in federal tax revenues, returning roughly two dollars (\$2.00) for every one dollar (\$1.00) invested; and

WHEREAS, seventy-five (75) years ago, the rivers in Tennessee were arguably some of the best warm/cool water fishing waters in America. Fisherman came from all over the country to experience once-in-a-lifetime fishing opportunities on Tennessee's beautiful river systems; and

WHEREAS, as a series of dams were being built within the State of Tennessee's river basins, the federal government assured the state's citizens that mitigation efforts would be included to offset the loss of the rivers' incredibly productive native fishery. The key component of this commitment was the construction of Dale Hollow National Fish Hatchery in 1965 near Dale Hollow Dam and the establishment of world-class trout waters below federal water development projects throughout the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Erwin National Fish Hatchery, established in 1897, supplies nine million (9,000,000) eyed rainbow trout eggs annually to support mitigation efforts by five (5) hatcheries in Tennessee and ten (10) hatcheries in six (6) other states; and

WHEREAS, Erwin National Fish Hatchery annually stocks thirty thousand pounds (30,000 lbs.) of spent rainbow trout brood stock, each weighing in excess of two-and-one-half pounds (2.5 lbs.), below federal water development projects and other waters throughout East Tennessee thus providing trophy class fisheries that attract fishermen from around the world; and

WHEREAS, these modest projects rank among the all-time success stories of our federal government, because of the overall economic impact and return on investment they produce; and

WHEREAS, fish and egg production at the Dale Hollow and Erwin National Fish Hatcheries employs eight hundred and forty-three (843) individuals in private sector jobs that provide goods and services to fishermen; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of small and large businesses employing thousands of individuals have been established in these world-class fishing areas because of the increase in tourism; and

WHEREAS, investment in the Dale Hollow and Erwin fish hatcheries has consistently demonstrated positive returns for more than a century. The federal government's goal to reduce the federal deficit and increase economic growth would be damaged, not enhanced, if funding for trout programs is eliminated to the detriment of its promise to Tennessee and the Nation, and to these small towns whose livelihood depends on the fish hatcheries; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly hereby memorializes the members of the Tennessee Congressional delegation to introduce, and the United States Congress to enact, legislation requiring the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to convey all right, title, and interest of the United States in the Dale Hollow National Fish Hatchery and the Erwin National Fish Hatchery to the State of Tennessee, without reimbursement, each such property to be used as a component of the fish culture program of the State.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that it is the sense of this General Assembly that the conveyance of the national fish hatcheries at Erwin and Dale Hollow from the federal

government to the State of Tennessee will allow these hatcheries to continue to contribute to the economic vitality of these towns, the State of Tennessee, and the entire country.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit certified copies of this resolution to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate of the United States Congress and to each member of the Tennessee Congressional delegation, with the request that this resolution be officially entered in the *Congressional Record*.